

20th March 1959]

Rice

* 904 Q.—SRI S. B. ADITYAN (on behalf of Sri T. T. Daniel) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

- (a) whether the Government have taken measures to control the price of rice;
- (b) the price of rice per measure or pukka;
- (c) the reasons for the rise in the price of rice; and
- (d) whether the Government propose to start Fair Price Shops to control the price of rice?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following were the retail price of Rice (II sort) in some of the important Centres during the weeks ended 13th February 1959 and 20th February 1959.

		13th Feb. 1959	20th Feb. 1959
Cuddalore	..	0.81	0.81
Vellore	..	0.81	0.81
Kumbakonam	..	0.78	0.78
Tiruchirappalli	..	0.84	0.80
Madurai	..	0.86	0.80
Nagercoil	..	0.84	0.81

(c) The prices have been rising from July 1958 as usually the prices rise during the lean months of the year. There had been a sharp increase in the prices of foodgrains in North India and there was a sympathetic trend in the prices in the South Zone also. With the current main harvest the prices have come down in many places.

(d) The Government have decided to build up a buffer stock of 2 lakhs tons of rice. The stocks will be released through Fair Price Shops, if and when the situation warrants it.

* 905 Q.—SRI A. A. RASHEED : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices for rice and other commodities have increased abnormally in the North Arcot district; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government to bring down the prices?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (a) No, Sir. The prices which were no doubt soaring up have begun to fall in all districts including North Arcot.

(b) 1. In order to stabilise the prices the Government have begun to build up a buffer stocks of 2 lakhs tons from the current harvest. Procurement operations are going on.